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The Brutal Birth of Archigram

SIMON SADLER

Archigram, the group with a little magazine that became the pre-eminent architectural avant-garde of the 1960s, was a youthful flowering of ideas that had been current on the fringes of competitions and discussion groups. 'All of us were lucky because it was something waiting to happen', Michael Webb has said of the Archigram phenomenon. 'We came at a time (1961) when there was a lot of architectural territory to move into and the work flowed out of us. For a generation immediately after us we had usurped all their architectural land.'[1] The territory was left vacant by the transition of the Brutalists, Britain's previous architectural vanguard, into the sort of classical respectability embodied by Alison and Peter Smithson's Economist Building, London (1960–64). Before it became famous for designing scandalous Walking Cities and Living Pods, Archigram started out as a sort of second wave Brutalism, pushing Brutalism's formal and technical possibilities to the limit.

The first *Archigram* was printed by Gestetner on two sheets and distributed in 1961 via London's Architectural Association (AA) and Regent Street Polytechnic to anyone prepared to shell-out 'the grand price of 6d and 1/6'[2] – mainly students and newly graduated professionals.[3] It was created by an extended group of contributors, before its core membership of just six men became established in 1963 with the publication of *Archigram* no.3. Two of those members, Peter Cook and David Greene (the former from the AA, the latter hailing from Nottingham School of Architecture) made the selections for the first edition, conscripting a third member, Michael Webb, from the Architectural Association's arch rival, the Regent Street Polytechnic. They were outspoken students enjoying 'famous' school careers, none more so than Webb. At the time that Webb's 1957–8 student project for a new Furniture Manufacturer's Building in High Wycombe was being exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art

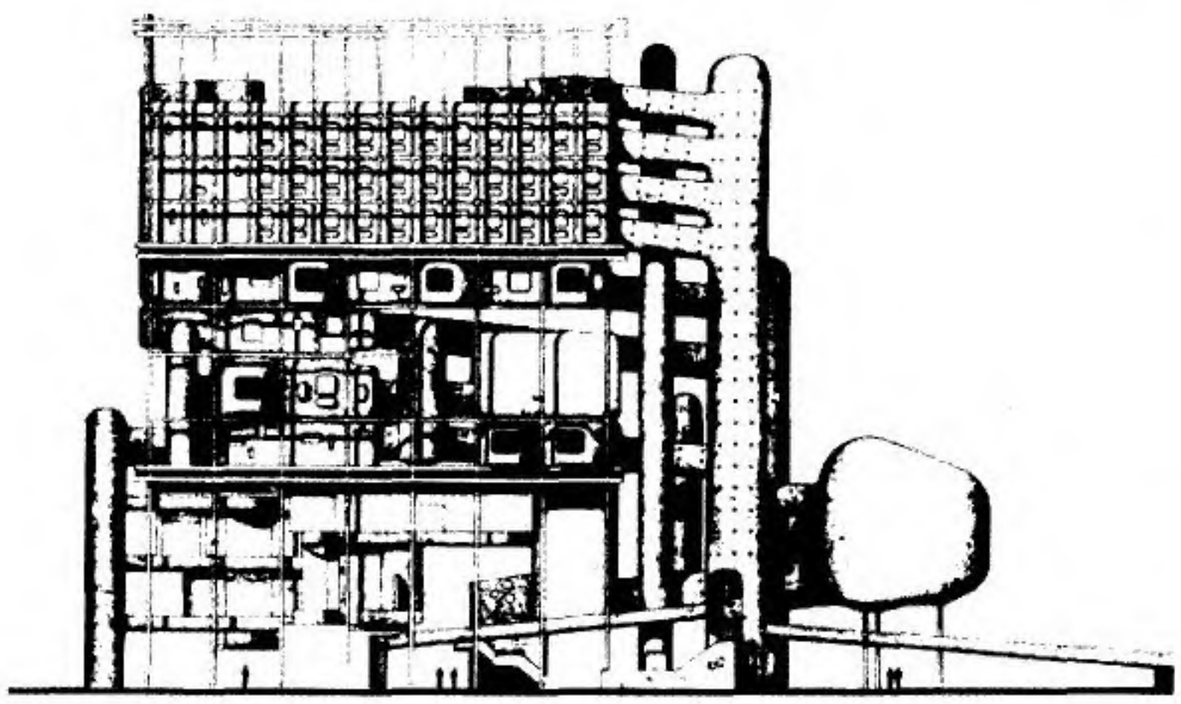


Figure 2. Michael Webb, Furniture Manufacturers Association Building in High Wycombe project, elevation (Regent Street Polytechnic fourth-year, 1957–8)

Figure 1. Main spread of *Archigram* no.1, May 1961

1. Michael Webb, interview with Herbert Lachmayer and Pascal Schöning at The Russell Hotel, London, 13/12/1991.

2. Letter to the author from Roy Payne, 12 May 1998. Payne was studying at the Regent Street Polytechnic between 1960 and 1966, and helped sell the magazine.

3. Interview with Gordon Sainsbury, Cambridge, Mass., 27/4/98.

in New York, Nikolaus Pevsner was moved to contrast the generally 'promising' state of British architecture with student work,[4] dismissing it as an attempt to 'out-Gaudí Gaudí'.[5] 'What will happen with students', asked Reyner Banham in his rejoinder to Pevsner, 'when what they see in their history lectures is stronger and tougher stuff than they get taught in their studio instruction? What happens when the practising masters of the day produce only near-beer, and the slides that are shown in the history lectures are 80° proof?'[6] With this, Banham was inciting a return to the avant-garde origins of modern architecture, mapped out in his *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* of 1960.

Launched at just the moment when Brutalism was slipping down a gear into the municipal, *Archigram* was perfectly in the logic of the avant-garde and of student agitation. Michael Webb knew the value of this sort of agitation, having been involved in the Regent Street Polytechnic's architectural magazine *Polygon*. Though never as radical as *Archigram*, the magazine enjoyed an 'avid student readership',[7] and the impact of its first couple of editions upon the stirrings at the Architectural Association was 'critical',[8] imported by its editors Wilfred Marden and John Outram when they transferred to the AA for their fourth years, the latter contributing to *Archigram*. *Polygon* fed into the student restlessness that had become apparent in the formation of the British Architectural Students Association (BASA) in 1958,[9] representing twenty-five schools and destined to become a sparring partner of Archigram.

'*Archigram* 1 was an outburst against the sterility of architecture surrounding one in London in the winter of 1960–61', *Architectural Design* explained in 1965.[10] Looking for inspiration, 'student work of the mid-fifties was all that could be pointed to'. Eight recent projects, all exploring 'post-Brutalist' possibilities, were stuffed on to that first *Archigram* broadsheet, a collage of meandering images and words. The late Edward Reynolds's project for a Concert Hall at Trafalgar Square acted as something of a talisman, an exemplar of the 'virtuoso free-forming at the AA'.[11] Reynolds's 'cubist' handling of form facetted every surface of the project, shown at the 1957 AA student exhibition which was lauded for its 'breakaway from graphpaper':[12] it seemed to AA tutor and Brutalist architect William Howell that the new work marked 'both an intellectual and a poetic reaction against the straight-up-and-down, strictly rectangular, tee-square and set-square, exposed frame structure'.[13]

'THIS IS ARCHIGRAM – PAPER ONE – A STATEMENT', the cover announced, though it took more than a little effort on the part of the reader to piece the 'statement' together. Words fell about so that they would be read synchronously, snaking around the page as if their sum meanings were so outrageous to the early sixties design establishment that they should be subject to a controlled release, intelligible only to those who were appropriately youthful:

A new generation of architecture must arise – with forms and spaces that seem to reject the precepts of 'Modern'
REJECT – curtains – design – history – graph paper
DIG ACCEPT endorse – homogeneity – travelators – Monk – expendability

The rejection of 'design' was a traumatic request for architects, and surprising given Archigram's subsequently massive production of drawings. But there it was: design, as in the cut-and-dried presentation of a solution, was too static, premeditated and removed from environmental context to be literally transcribed into built form; there can therefore be no more design in the traditional sense of the word. The determinism of orthogonals, or the logic of the studio-produced statistical 'graph' as a source for environmental control had to go the same way; the jibe was aimed at the sort of rationalist / Modernist teaching at the key schools (part of the first year at the Bartlett, for instance, was spent studying science and a choice of 'allometry, semiotics, Markovian analysis, sensory thresholds, self-regulating systems, Boolean algebra, theory of

4. Michael Webb, lecture at the Bartlett School of Architecture, London, 22/3/98.

5. Nikolaus Pevsner, 'Modern Architecture and the Historian, or, the Return of Historicism', *RIBA Journal*, April 1961, pp.230–240, p.231, cited in Jonathan Hughes, '1961', in Louise Campbell, ed., *Twentieth-Century Architecture and its Histories*, London: Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain, 2001.

6. Pevsner, 'Modern Architecture and the Historian', p.238, cited in Hughes, '1961', ibid.

7. Brian Hanson, 'Polygon', in *Rassegna (Architecture in the Little Magazines)*, vol.4, no.12, Milan, December 1982, p.72.

8. Peter Cook, 'The Electric Decade: An Atmosphere at the AA School 1963–73', in James Gowan, ed., *A Continuing Experiment: Learning and Teaching at the Architectural Association*, London, Architectural Press, 1975, pp.137–146, p.138, ftn 3.

9. See George Kassaboff, John Outram, Paul Power, Ian McKechnie, 'Student Section – BASA', *Architects' Journal*, vol.129, no.3342, 19 March 1959, p.451.

10. Anon., 'Archigram Group, London: A chronological survey', *Architectural Design*, vol.35, no.11, November 1965, p.560.

11. ibid. Reynolds died in 1959.

12. *Archigram* no.1, London 1961, n.p.

13. William Howell, writing in the *AA Journal* vol.74, February 1959, p.218, quoted in Brian Hanson, ''Il momento inglese', *Rassegna (Architecture in the Little Magazines)*, vol.4, no.12, Milan, December 1982, pp.31–40.

measurement or the theory of limits').[14] In place of such high-sounding approaches Archigram proposed Futurist 'expendability', a permit to do away with designs as soon as their peak of efficiency has passed.

The new architecture should 'seem to reject precepts of the Modern' – the precepts taught in the architectural schools, perhaps, though not necessarily the precepts of the Modernist pioneers. *Archigram* no.1 announced 'WE HAVE CHOSEN TO BYPASS THE DECAYING BAUHAUS IMAGE WHICH IS AN INSULT TO FUNCTIONALISM', including the ubiquitous motif of the curtain wall. Instead of the *image* of standardisation presented by the curtain wall, true 'homogeneity' would return architecture to its dream of standardised, mass-produced structures that could be deployed *ad hoc*. The spirit of the machine age would live again, its citizens transported by travelator. These young architects sought the uncorrupted source of an ethos which had whetted their appetites for experimentation, technology and structure.

Like Henry Ford, the Modern Movement had largely rejected 'history', at least in its more obvious deference to the Orders, decoration, symmetry and hierarchical typologies. Yet it had retained others, particularly proportion, trabeation and axial planning – one only had to look at the temples in Le Corbusier's *Vers une architecture*, or John Summerson's final chapter of *The Classical Language of Architecture* (1963), or to Banham's examination of the Beaux-Arts origins of certain Modernist axioms in the first chapter of *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*. The Archigram generation of architects would not submit to the classical pattern-book. New buildings would be placed on top of and around those existing buildings whose fixed plans had out-served their usefulness. The result would be architectural disjunction, a visual break with yesterday, an anti-idealism. Architecture would embrace discord, like jazz pianist renegade Thelonious Monk, and would adopt the same choppy, streetwise tone in which *Archigram*'s statement was scripted.[15]

As the Economist Building showed, not even Brutalism had achieved the escape velocity needed to pull out of the classical orbit. In their student projects Webb, Cook and Greene dared to turn the logic of the New Brutalism in upon itself. If Brutalism – the most challenging style of British architecture in the Fifties – still wanted a frank exposure of process, of circulation, of response, and a sensitivity to site and technology, Archigram would carry on meting it out, in spades. The departure point of the youngsters, visible in *Archigram* no.1, was a 'topology' (to use a word in vogue in the Fifties) gone mad: an obsessive interest in circulation; in a complex, 'organic' relationship to site; in a 'rational' separation and expression of services; even in a compositional formlessness derived from Abstract Expressionism and *art brut*. Allied to Pier Luigi Nervi's in-situ ferrocimento method, with an exoskeleton holding pre-cast floor panels, Webb's Furniture Manufacturer's Building showed how far the principles could be pushed, and the results were, if anything, too avant-garde, a 'cartoon architecture' too flashy to qualify as Brutalism.[16] The frame valiantly imposed a visual order to volumes on the brink of formlessness, swallowing up a showroom and company offices on the lower floors, lettable office space in attic storeys, with a bulbous auditorium clinging to the side through umbilical cords. One could legitimately expose the services, like the water tower at the Brutalist icon of Hunstanton Secondary School (Alison and Peter Smithson, 1949–54). But a building like the Furniture Manufacturer's that was apparently nothing *but* services, stacked crazily in a frame, lacked decorum. And the expression of circulation in it temporarily defied categorisation: Reyner Banham, who had discovered the term 'topological' for the Smithsons, had to rise to the challenge again when he declared the explosion of work at Regent Street Polytechnic to be 'Bowellist'. If 'topology' had attempted to relate the building to principles derived from geographical layout and abstract mathematics, 'Bowellism' related the building to the

14. Crinson & Lubbock, *Architecture, Art or Profession?: three hundred years of architectural education in Britain*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1994, p.148, citing Richard Llewelyn Davies, *The Education of an Architect*, London, 1961, p.6, and Dean Latourell, 'The Bartlett 1969', *AIA Journal*, October 1969, p.91.

15. Christopher Booker, *The Neophiliacs: a study of the revolution in English life in the Fifties and Sixties*, London, Collins, 1969, p.41. 'DIG', in case the reader of *Archigram* didn't realise, meant 'endorse' (in *The Neophiliacs*, a critical survey of the 1960s published eight years later, the conservative Christopher Booker wearily explained that the embrace both of jazz and sensational language signified the 'almost indefinable state of being "hep" [*sic*] or "in the groove."')

16. See Appleyard, *Richard Rogers – a biography*, London and Boston, Faber, 1986, p.181: 'To the Smithsons it was Mickey Mouse architecture ...'.

circulation of the gut and to biological systems, announced in its disturbing, bulbous forms.

Biology and technology, only metaphors for the Brutalists, were models for Archigram. Greene took the cue in his startling 1961 Seaside Entertainments Building, its main chambers hovering translucent like the muscles of a heart from an aorta service tower. The implication was that the Seaside Building could comfortably become part of a larger architectural / biological machine. Again, in Cook's Car Body / Pressed Metal Cabin student housing project of 1961–2, there seemed to be something too *literal* about the design, in this case a transcription of enthusiasms for industrial design that were expected in Brutalist circles to be tempered by an instinct for 'proper' architecture. Archigram tried to show that 'Detroit-styled' houses were not a proposition for twenty-five years' hence (as the Smithsons were at pains to claim in regard to their famous 'Pop' House of the Future for the 1956 *Ideal Home* Exhibition), but for the here-and-now of the 1960s, thus questioning Brutalism's increasing austerity and concrete fixity.

Webb, Greene and Cook had got to know each other in 1959 'and used to meet up pretty regularly in a "greasy spoon" caff at Swiss Cottage'.[17] Cook noticed the competition entries being submitted by London County Council (LCC) employees Ron Herron, Dennis Crompton and Warren Chalk, and he invited them to contribute to the second edition of *Archigram* in 1962, lending it a professional credibility that it might have lacked had it continued as a student rag. 'Crazy stuff', Cook recalled of the competition entries from the LCC set,[18] though it would be more accurate to say that the LCC work represented the cutting-edge of what the new wave of Brutalism could realistically hope to get built. Able to take advantage of their relative freedom as recent graduates, Cook, Greene and Webb had been cultivating work that was more romantic than that of their colleagues working in the real-world grind of the LCC. This became evident when teams from both of Archigram's pools, 'graduate' and 'LCC', entered the 1961 Lincoln Civic Centre Competition. The Chalk, Herron and Crompton entry, which gained a commendation, was in the 'late Brutalist' style that they were deploying at the LCC's South Bank project: a 'topological' plan, incorporating any number of irregular polygonal shapes, stacked in elevation over several levels, pulled together by a few deftly-placed walkways. Contrasting with the hard-edge approach of the LCC team were Cook and Greene's more Bowellist, soft, poetic, low-rise elevations, hugging a landscaped site.[19] Yet common to both entries was a love of mound-like buildings, which would emerge as a key theme in the work of the Archigram group.

Figure 3. David Greene, Seaside Entertainments Building project (Cliffside Entertainments Building), drawing, 1961

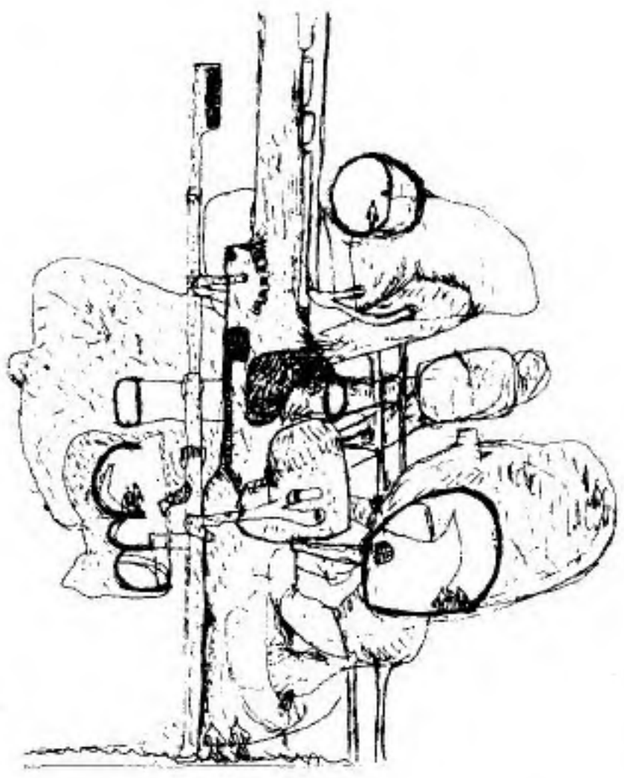
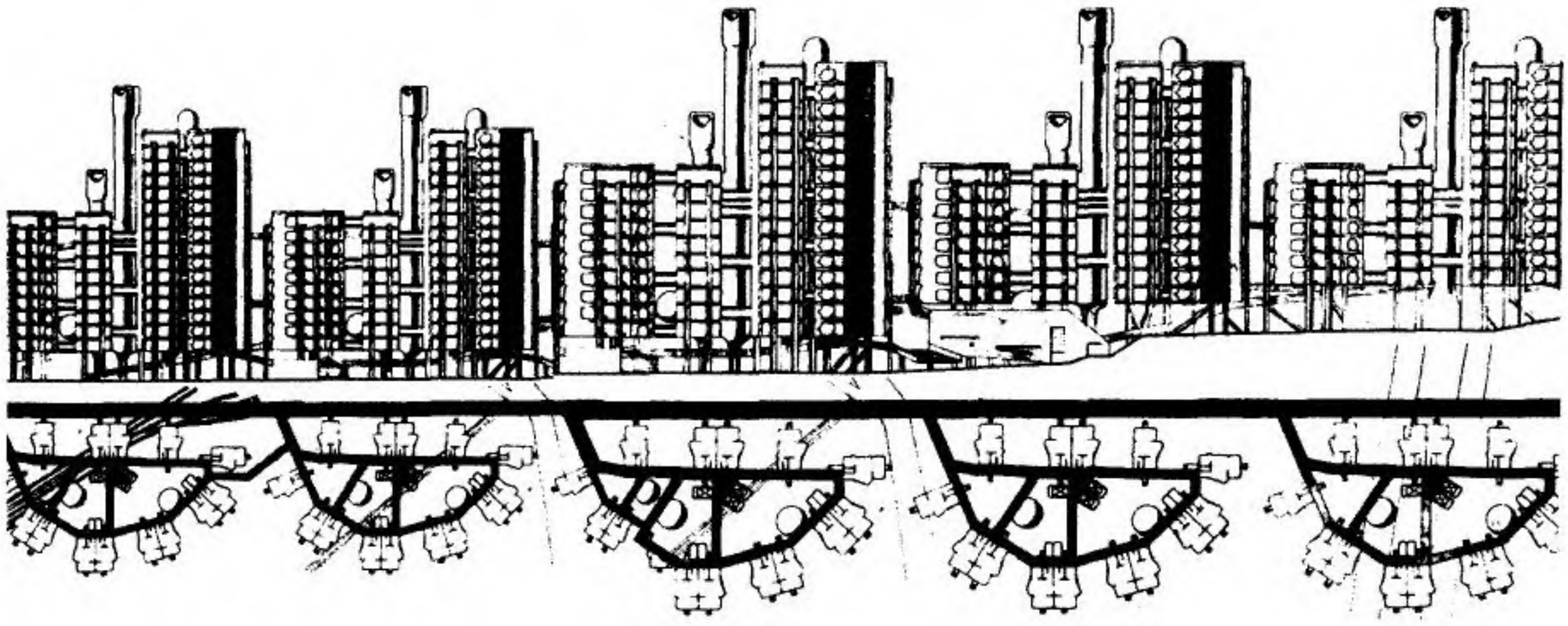


Figure 4. Peter Cook, Car Body / Pressed Metal Cabin student housing project, plan and elevation, 1961–2



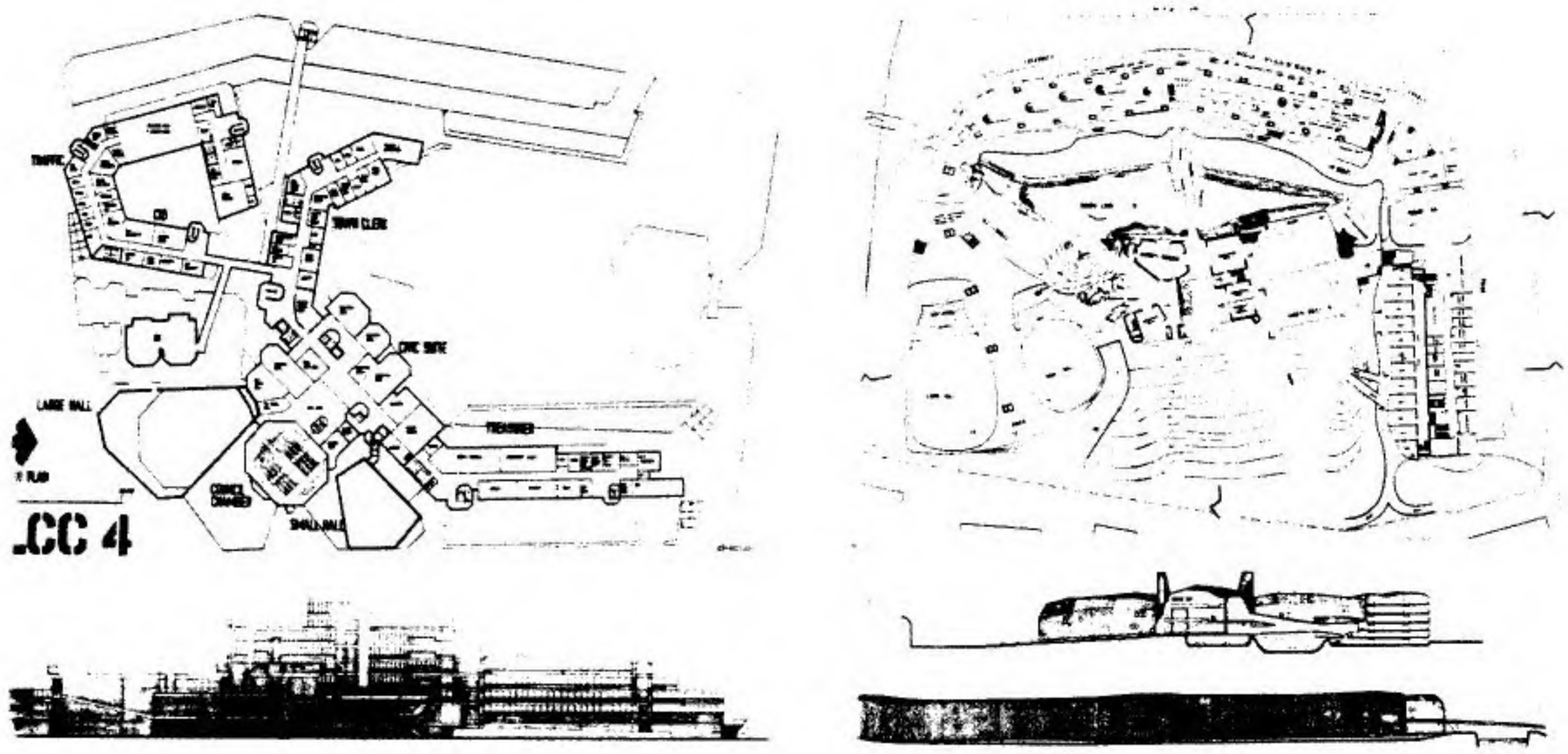
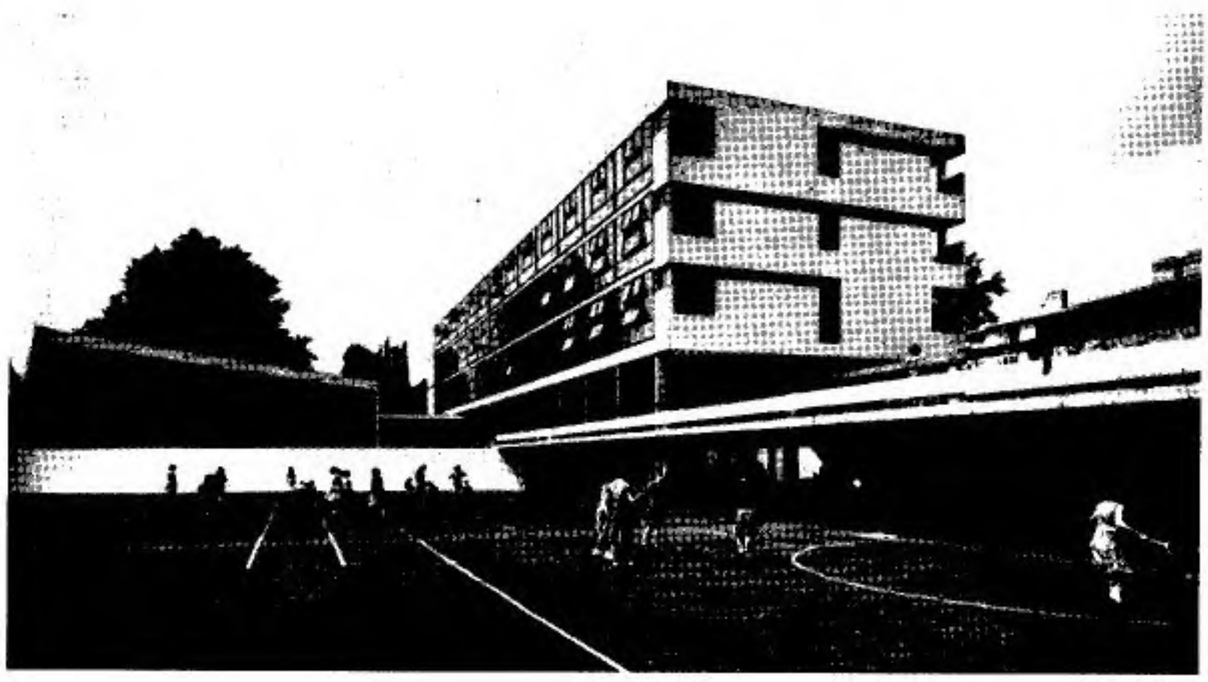


Figure 5. (left) Chalk, Herron and Crompton (with John Attenborough, Terry Kennedy, John Roberts, Alan Waterhouse), Lincoln Civic Centre Competition, plan and elevation, 1961; (right): Cook and Greene, Lincoln Civic Centre Competition, plan and elevation, 1961

Figure 6. Ron Herron and Peter Nicholls for London County Council, Starcross (Prospect) Secondary School, St. Pancras, London 1957

Ron Herron had joined the LCC's Schools Division in 1954. The LCC had previously employed the Brutalist architects whose influence on the nascent Archigram was so evident; Alison and Peter Smithson themselves had briefly worked in the Schools Division, partly using the time to complete work on Hunstanton Secondary School.[20] It was at the LCC that Herron met Warren Chalk, who joined the same year, and they become inseparable – 'the Morecambe and Wise of architecture'.[21] Chalk and Herron's designs between 1956 and 1958 – their Paisley Technical College and Enfield Civic Centre competition entries, and Chalk's Chelsea College of Advanced Education – were competent if modest combinations of 1920s Corbusian styling and a certain Brutalist ruggedness. Even Herron's more widely noticed 1957 St. Pancras Starcross (Prospect) Secondary School, with Peter Nicholls, had as many fashionable similarities with the old as with the new. In 1968 Roy Landau singled it out as an exemplar of young LCC architecture. In Landau's concise description, Starcross 'was a Modern-Movement, classically grouped building complex with Garches-smooth facades'; on the other hand, 'it had the current vernacular inverted-L window and used a "movement organising" concourse bridge, an idea of the Brutalists.'[22]

It was a start for the young pretenders, at least, and it found its way into select company in G.E. Kidder-Smith's *The New Architecture of Europe*, pub-



17. Cook, 'A Quickstart Introduction to the Archigram Group', in Archigram, ed., *A Guide to Archigram 1961–74*, London, Academy, 1994, p.6.

18. ibid., p.8.

19. The Cook / Greene entry for the Berkshire County Offices Competition the following year was a comparable achievement.

20. See Anthony Jackson, *The Politics of Architecture: a history of modern architecture in Britain*, London, Architectural Press, 1970, p.194.

21. Norman Engleback, address to the 20th Century Society's Hayward Gallery symposium, Architectural Association, London 20/3/99.

22. Royston Landau, *New Directions in British Architecture*, London, Studio Vista, 1968, p.46.

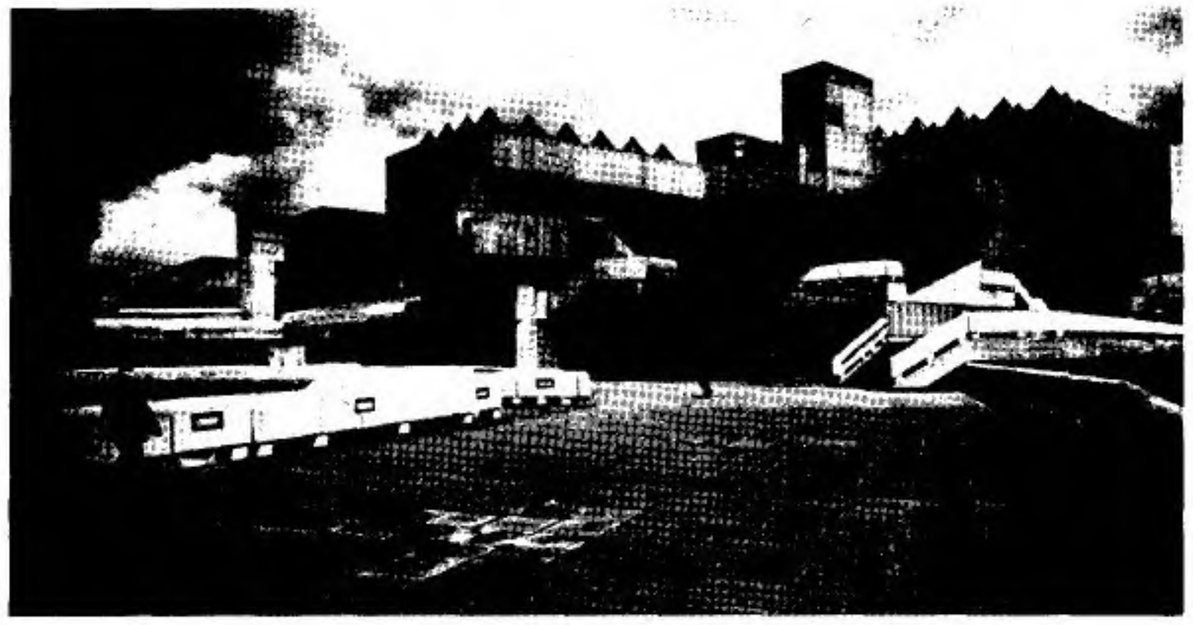


Figure 7. Chalk, Herron, Crompton, and John Attenborough, for group leader Norman Engleback at the Special Works Division of the LCC, South Bank Arts Centre, 1960–67, seen from the pedestrian deck to the south-west

lished by Penguin in 1961. Some features of the Starcross school foretold the increasingly radical LCC work that Herron would be involved in at the South Bank Centre. For instance, Starcross was designed with the facility to be enlarged and changed (into a college), much as the South Bank would be, anticipating the architecture of endless 'becoming' that would preoccupy Archigram. The uses of a multi-level plan at Starcross were striking. Herron and Nicholl took to heart Brutalist ideas of circulation and multiple function, borrowed from the Smithsons and Aldo van Eyck. In addition to the '"movement-organising" concourse bridge' that caught Landau's eye at Starcross, Kidder Smith noted that 'by excavating and clearing the basements of the houses previously on the site, a sunken playground, which flows right under the east end of the elevated teaching block, was created so that outdoor recreation could be enjoyed even in bad weather,'[23] a foretaste of the South Bank's infamous undercroft. So it was that ideas about multi-level deck access, independent systems of movement, the principle of 'cluster' and, for that matter, *béton brut*, began to be properly realised not so much under the Brutalist 'avant-garde' itself, but under a 'retardataire' of architects at the LCC. Warren Chalk, the eldest member of the group, admitted that he could have fallen in with the earlier camp of Brutalists – 'I joined your lot. I could have joined the other lot.'[24]

Chalk and Herron encountered Dennis Crompton when, upon recommendation from a friend, they persuaded him in 1960 to leave Frederick Gibberd's office for the glamorous LCC Special Works Division, to which they had been transferred.[25] Together, their South Bank complex would be a snapshot of advanced architectural interests at the turn of the new decade. Under Chalk, Herron, Crompton, and John Attenborough, for group leader Norman Engleback, the South Bank Arts Centre finally juxtaposed the New Brutalism with the great achievement of an earlier generation of British Modernists, the Royal Festival Hall (1948–51), which was being remodelled at the same time. Contrary to the Festival Hall's bright, civic, slightly nautical and unerringly rational confidence, the South Bank Centre truculently crumbled its two shuttered-concrete concert-halls and gallery into the riverside, deflecting any hint of a processional route with blind bends and furtive staircases, reluctant to reveal so much as a front door.

Though powerfully sculptural, the Centre's resistance to being a resolved composition is underlined when compared to its superficially similar Cubist neighbour on the other side, Denys Lasdun's National Theatre (1967–77), which is held in check by its regulating horizontal layers and crisp corners. Critics and admirers alike soon noted the expressionism of the South Bank Centre.[26] Debts to the 1920s, to Le Corbusier and Konstantin Melnikov, even to Rudolf Steiner could be detected, but in a state too dreamlike to be nailed

23. G.E. Kidder Smith, *The New Architecture of Europe*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1962, p.52.

24. Peter Cook, address to the AA 150 Anniversary seminar at the Clore Management Centre, Birkbeck College, London, 9/7/97.

25. Anon., 'Archigram Group, London: A chronological survey', *Architectural Design*, vol.35, no.11, November 1965, p.560.

26. See Landau, *New Directions in British Architecture*, pp.31–37.

down as straight historical antecedents (with odd exceptions like the Unité d'Habitation-derived staircase on the Queen Elizabeth Hall). Imagery was potent but abstract, the silhouette bristling with pyramid skylights, the Hayward's west window like a pill-box gun installation or visor, the aggression of the whole ensemble tempered by a comic-book eclecticism of the sort that would be found in *Archigram* no.4, 1964.

A lugubrious project – first designed in 1960, completed in 1964, and officially opened in 1967 – the strange massing of the South Bank explored several interests central to Archigram's architecture. The first was its adaptation of the pedestrian net devised by the Smithsons in their 1957 Berlin Haupstadt project: the South Bank Centre was the first serious attempt to build the Brutalist multi-level city, with the ravines of imaginary vehicular traffic separated from pedestrian circulation above. The building seemed to have a disproportionate amount of 'exterior', solving at the same time the classic design problem of articulating the blank elevation of an auditorium. Unlike Berlin Haupstadt, though, the South Bank's 'topological' walkways purported to connect one place to another rather than provide an abstract sense of mobility: Chalk was assigned to design the walkways and approaches to the Centre,[27] one rationale being the hope that British Rail would build an escalator link from Waterloo station.[28] The building took further cues from the walkways of Sheffield's famous Park Hill estate (Lewis Womersley, Jack Lynn and Ivor Smith, 1953–59), and from the surface textures of surrounding buildings too: John Miller and Christopher Dean's Brutalist Old Vic Theatre workshops (1957–8, for Lyons Israel Ellis), and Owen Williams's Sainsbury's warehouse in Stamford Street.[29]

But of course the circulation plan of the South Bank Centre was far from being a functionalist exercise. Extruding a new pedestrian deck from the Festival Hall's terrace level, the South Bank Centre wilfully heaped-up into a miniature multi-level 'city'. As Edward Jones and Christopher Woodward have acerbically noted, in the event 'the raised pedestrian decks and bridges seem both inconvenient and irrelevant on this quiet site, with no through traffic from which pedestrians might need protection. The decks are windy, offering no protection from the weather, and are difficult for the frail or disabled to negotiate.'[30] It is a criticism that benefits from hindsight, and the adventure of visiting the complex has since been curtailed by blocked staircases and closed terraces, sacrificed to cheap crime prevention and the vicissitudes of architectural fashion. Nonetheless the South Bank Centre's insensitivity to the infirm betrayed its Futurist inspirations, prioritising the young and able-bodied, motorised vehicles, and air, with ducts heroically scaled and standing proud of the volumes of the building.[31]

'The original basic concept', Chalk recalled in 1966, 'was to produce an anonymous pile, subservient to a series of pedestrian walkways, a sort of Mappin Terrace [the artificial mountain at London Zoo] for people instead of goats.'[32] The exposure of pedestrians to wind and wet as they hike along the bridges, ridges and plateaux of the South Bank emphasised the designers' preoccupation with styling the building as some sort of natural or organic feature. The agglomeration of sheer cliffs of shuttered wood-grained concrete, contrasting with the overscaled rock-like rounded deck walls, alluded to geology and weathering, and in Archigram's self-penned 1971 anthology, the South Bank Centre was covered in a discussion of the group's fascination with 'mounds' and 'crusts' (themes examined in *Archigram* no.5, 1964). One drawing by Herron even proposed turfing over the entire structure.[33] And so the nearest Archigram came to major built statements began and ended with the metaphor of the mound, of the disappeared building: the still-born Monte Carlo Entertainments Centre (1969–73) was to have been built literally beneath a mound.

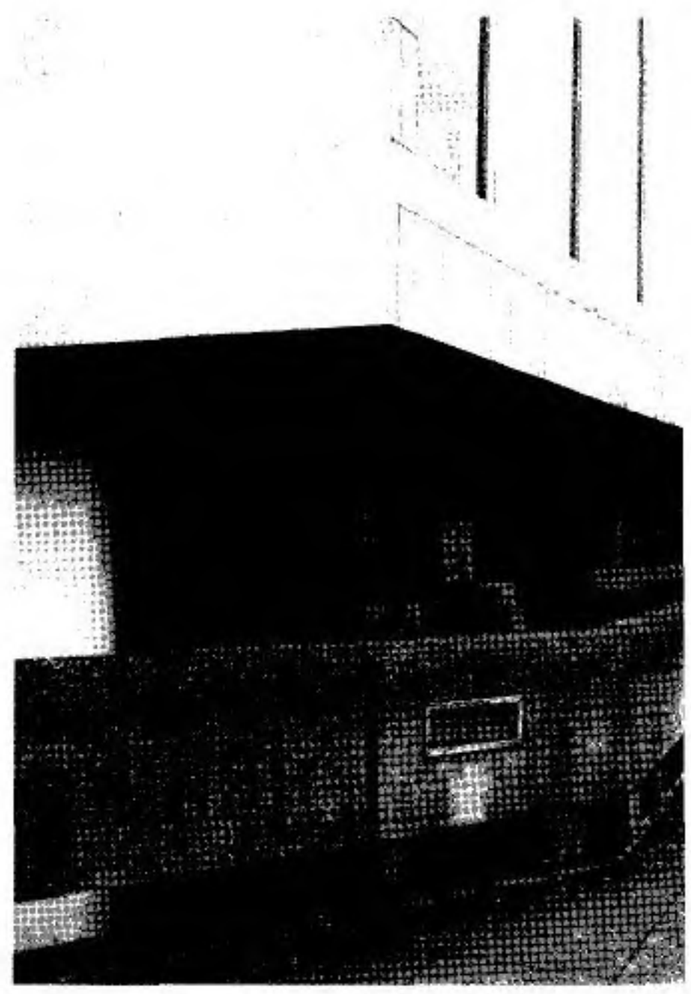


Figure 8. Pedestrian deck intersection of the South Bank Centre, 1960–67, with the Royal Festival Hall, 1948–51/62

27. Norman Engleback, address to the 20th Century Society's Hayward Gallery symposium, Architectural Association, London 20/3/99.

28. Robert Maxwell, address to the 20th Century Society's Hayward Gallery symposium, Architectural Association, London 20/3/99.

29. Andrew Saint, address to the 20th Century Society's Hayward Gallery symposium, Architectural Association, London 20/3/99.

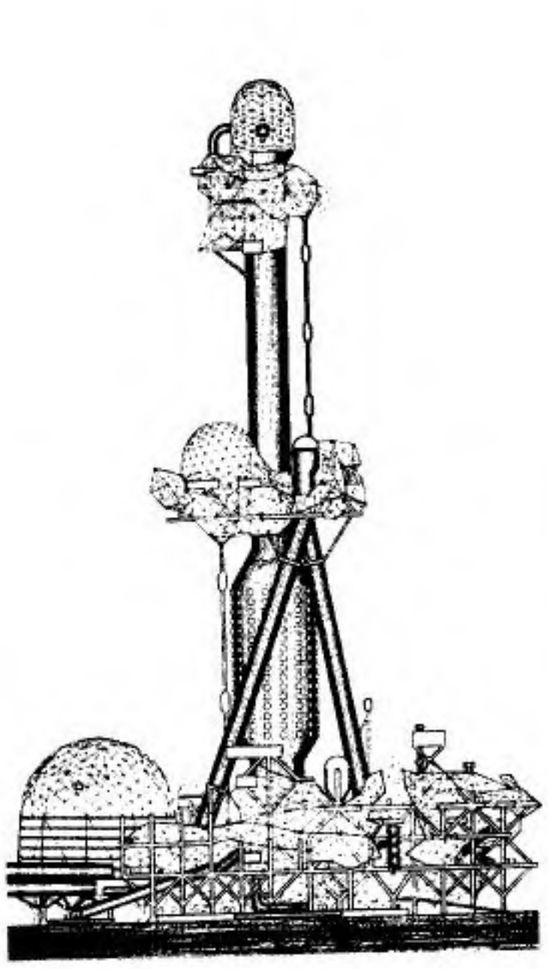
30. Edward Jones & Christopher Woodward, *A Guide to the Architecture of London*, 2nd edition, London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1992, p.258.

31. For commentary on the Queen Elizabeth Hall's services, see Reyner Banham, *The Architecture of the Well-tempered Environment*, London, Architectural Press, 1969, pp.255–64.

32. Warren Chalk, 'Architecture as consumer product', *Arena: the Architectural Association Journal*, no.81, March 1966, pp.228–230, reprinted in Archigram, ed., *A Guide to Archigram*, pp.92–93, p.92.

33. Andrew Saint, address to the 20th Century Society's Hayward Gallery symposium, Architectural Association, London 20/3/99.

In 1962 Crompton, Herron and Chalk left the LCC for Taylor Woodrow Construction, on Theo Crosby's invitation. Crosby, a pivotal figure of the London arts scene, was assembling a team for the rebuilding of Euston Station, and later that year he added to the team three more architects: Cook, Webb and Greene. Thus the two 'pools' of Archigram were formally joined into one. The team's massive Euston project, one of the largest of its time, was never to see the light of day, yet the intensity of the creative 'sub-culture' permitted by Crosby at the Euston site hut was undimmed, fuelled by copies of *Architectural Design* and *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*. Cook was able to draw up his crystalline, geodesic, Bowellist design for a Montreal Tower knowing that Crosby was



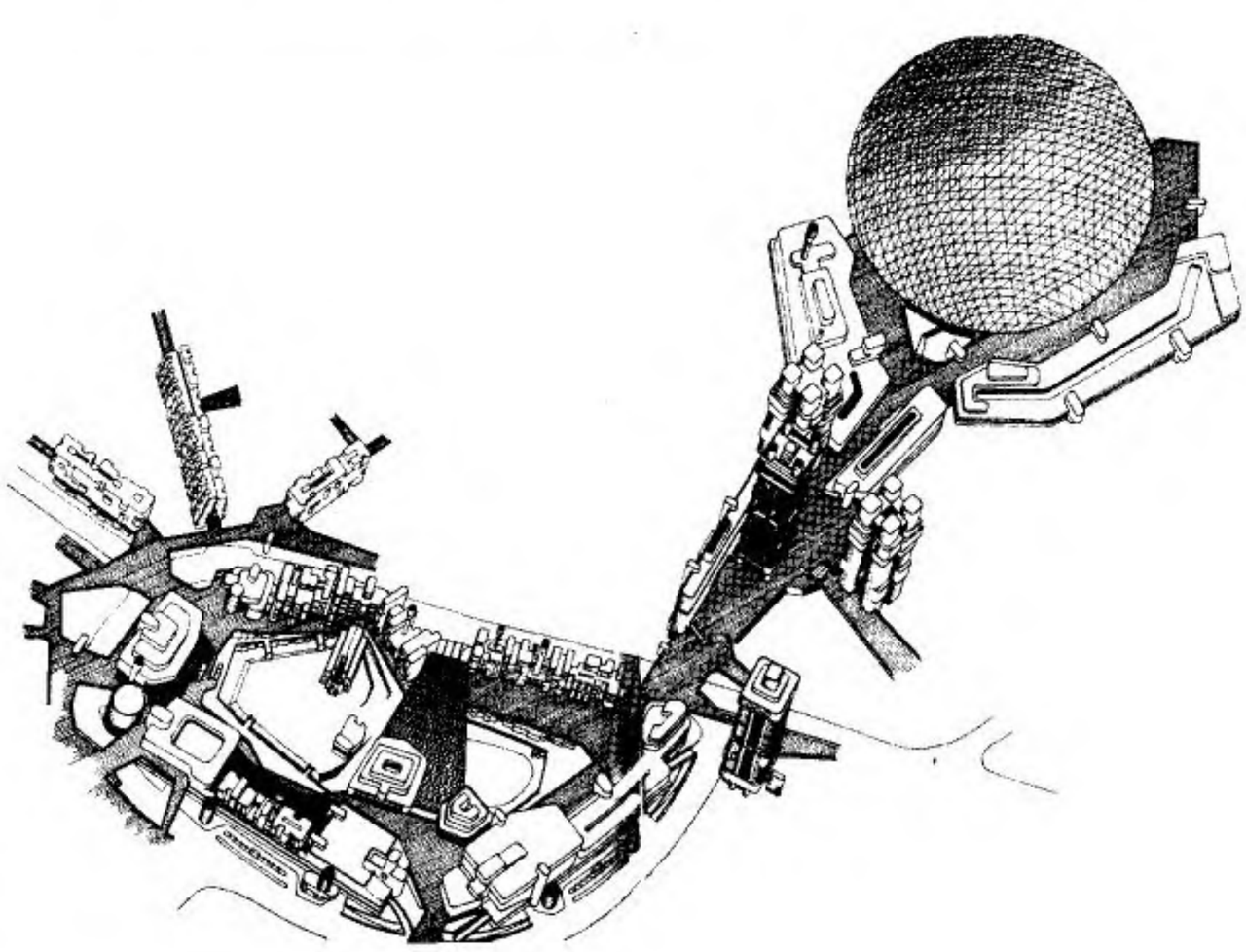


Figure 9. Peter Cook for Taylor Woodrow, Montreal Tower project, elevation, 1963

Figure 10. Taylor Woodrow Group, Axonometric drawing of central area, *Urban Renewal: Fulham Study*, 1963

prepared to take it to the organisers of the 1964 Montreal Expo as a project for a central feature (in the manner of the 1951 Powell and Moya Skylon at the Festival of Britain). Working for the industrial muscle of Taylor Woodrow made even megastructural developments, like the 1963 Fulham Road Study, a heady possibility.

Its monolithic, irregularly-shaped and round-cornered shops, offices and flats were grouped in the mode established by Chalk, Herron and Crompton, but in the way that the development terminated in a gigantic glassy geodesic dome, it showed the influence of Cook, Webb and Greene. Here was evidence that Archigram was thinking as a group, regardless of whose name (in this case, Herron's) appeared on the final drawings. The Fulham project was also the group's last involvement with urbanism in a traditional, massive, and indeed Brutalist sense. Though the Fulham scheme was included in the group's 1963 *Living City* exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (a decisively avant-garde intervention set up at the suggestion of Crosby), the rest of the show concentrated on the regeneration of modern life through 'non-architectural' means – everyday life, consumption, technology, atmospheres. It was a springboard into a world without mass.